

THE TALON



OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

SERVING THE SOLDIERS OF TASK FORCE EAGLE

SPECIAL DELIVERY

MP receives reply from the president

By 1st Lt. AL SWEPSON
358th MPAD

Pfc. Lisa M. Adams is an avid letter writer who receives more than her fair share of correspondence from a wide variety of people.



Pfc. Lisa Adams

But even she was surprised by the return address on a piece of mail she received recently — The White House.

“Thank you for sharing your thoughts about your mission in the former Yugoslavia. I was truly inspired by your letter,” the president wrote.

The Calumet, Mich. native sent the president a three-page letter in March about how her

outlook has changed since she arrived in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

“I write a lot of letters, and I’m thinking, I’m gonna write a letter to President Bill Clinton,” Adams said.

The 23-year-old military police soldier with the 501st Military Police Company said she did on a whim.

“I mean, the letter wasn’t a joke, but sending it was,” Adams said. “Everybody says I’m cheating up to him. But why would I do that? I never see him. It is a keepsake letter, you know?”

“I was at a traffic control point, and I read my letter to the president out loud to the other

See *Letter*, page 12

Peace enforcers



Staff Sgt. Jon E. Long

Pfc. Glenn Garrity mans a .50 caliber machine gun on a M109A3 155mm self-propelled howitzer at McGill Base. His unit, A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery, supports the 1st Brigade.

Elections key to troop departure from Bosnia

NATO commander says troops doing well, operation on track

By JIM GARAMONE
American Forces Press Service

What happens between now and the local elections will dictate how soon U.S. soldiers can leave Bosnia-Herzegovina, said Gen. George Joulwan during a Pentagon news briefing.

Joulwan, while in Washington for the commander in chief conference with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also said the operation is on track.

“The troops are behaving superbly,” he said. “They have done everything they have been asked to do well.”

Joulwan, supreme allied commander, Europe, said when U.S. service members leave the war-torn country depends on how much progress is made between now and when elections are held. Those elections must be held

by September according to the Peace Agreement.

“We are concentrating on the elections,” Joulwan said. “How they go influences much of what we do later.”

Police protection, dealing with refugees and infrastructure improvements also influence when NATO forces begin leaving.

Joulwan listed separating the parties to the Peace Agreement, getting heavy weapons into cantonment areas and helping open up the country as the main accomplishments of the Implementation Force to date.



Gen. George Joulwan

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From the top

Complacency endangers convoys, troops

Complacency. It's a word I've discussed numerous times in this column, but the fact is, we are there. We're complacent.

Complacency is the number one problem in Task Force Eagle right now.

As most of you know, I do a good bit of traveling around the task force's area of operation. And in my self-appointed role as the NCOs' conscience, I see a lot of things.

I'd like to think that some of the oversights I notice are failings that NCOs have somehow missed. But some seem as if they would be difficult to miss.

Take, for example, convoy op-



Command Sgt. Maj. Jack L. Tilley
1st Armored Division

erations. We're discussed this subject before, yet I still occasionally see soldiers traveling without wearing helmets, which is a sure indication they are complacent.

It is the job of leaders to enforce strict uniform policies, making sure soldiers wear their helmets with the chin straps properly secured.

To date, U.S. forces serving in Bosnia-Herzegovina have suffered relatively few injuries, thanks to effective force protection and strong leadership. And I'd like to remind our leaders that good leadership should not be a sporadic occurrence. To be

good leaders, we must constantly influence our subordinates, peers and superiors to do the right thing. And, usually, the right thing is fairly obvious.

As leaders, we must stay focused on the mission.

Sleeping in vehicles also remains a problem. If your troops get tired on the road, have them stop their vehicles and get out to stretch, making sure they maintain security as they take a break.

Just because the weather has warmed up is no reason for increased speed. Leaders should remind soldiers to keep their speed to the posted limit.

Also tell your soldiers to forgo using personal tape player/radios that could hamper their hearing. They also should not read a newspaper

while in a convoy. This may distract them from being aware of their surroundings.

Before you set out, make sure you have communication, not only with the other vehicles, but also with your higher headquarters. Drivers should also maintain the appropriate distance between vehicles.

By now, everyone understands the commanding general's rule that says soldiers who are in a stopped vehicle longer than two minutes, 30 seconds, must hop out and clean the windshield.

Many soldiers are exhibiting outstanding performance and pride in their units by complying with safe convoy practices.

For those who are not — sergeants, make it happen!

Viewpoint

Desert Storm vet reflects on current deployment

I am an intelligence analyst for B Company, 501st Military Intelligence Battalion, which supports the Ready First Combat Team. As a Desert Storm/Desert Shield veteran, I would like to draw some comparisons between the deployments in the Gulf and here, and state my opinions on a couple of other topics.



Sgt. Ronald Kerr
501st MI Battalion

In August of 1990, I deployed to Saudi Arabia with C Battery, 319th Airborne Field Artillery, 82nd Airborne Division from Fort Bragg, N.C. I had only been a cannon crewmember in my unit for two months. For a private on his first deployment, I thought, "Boy, did I pick the wrong year to join the Army!"

We did live in modern Saudi Arabian military post for the first 4-1/2 months of the deployment, and I shared a room that was designed for eight with 12 other soldiers. To say it was crowded is an extreme understatement.

The main comparisons that I would say in relation to that deployment are the following:

- Living in the tent environment is definitely an improvement. From more living space to showers and latrines with running water, we are better off. The living and working facilities here are quite an improvement.
- The morale efforts that have been made here (better

morale tents, gym facilities, mess halls, and the R&R policy) have definitely helped ease the strain of this deployment.

• The length of the deployment, or at least having an idea as to when the deployment will end, contributes greatly to peace of mind. Granted, a year is a long time, but at least we know of the general time frame of when we will be returning to our base. In Saudi Arabia, all we knew was, "we'll go home, when it's over."

• The pay we are receiving has significantly improved — at least for the single soldiers. Not only do I receive more basic pay as a sergeant, but separate rations is a real bonus. It is a good thing that the federal government has exempted us from income tax withholding as they did in the Persian Gulf.

• The quality of soldiers and

people is neither better or worse, just different. I worked for and with some of the most competent, professional soldiers in the Gulf, and thankfully that tradition continues here.

• In case any of you are wondering, General Order No. 1 was in effect for the duration of the Persian Gulf deployment, also.

The Army has definitely improved the conditions for deployed soldiers, and it has been (and will continue to be) my honor to serve alongside the dedicated professionals of the RFCT.

Don't get me wrong, I loved serving in the 82nd Airborne Division. It's just that the Army, as far as creature comforts are concerned, has made great strides for the benefit of the mission and the soldiers.

Airborne/Ready First!

THE TALON

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Spc. George Roache

Dental hygienist Sgt. Sylvia Real de Garcia cleans a soldier's teeth.

Dental care just a base camp away in task force

By Spc. GEORGE ROACHE
29th MPAD

When it comes to good dental health during Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR, soldiers here have a reason to smile.

Camp Rumbaugh, located in the Tuzla area, has a dental clinic that can fill their needs.

"Soldiers can get almost everything here they can get in garrison except sophisticated procedures that require lab services, that is, gold crowns and full and partial dentures," said Maj. (Dr.) Charles Jenness, deputy commander of the 122nd Medical Detachment (Dental Service), from Hanau, Germany.

As the task force's primary dental center, the clinic provides routine restorative services like fillings, root canals, temporary crowns, partial denture repairs and extractions, Jenness said.

Its three dentists and three hygienists see an average of 30 to 40 patients a day. Most cases are checkups and general cleanings, while the rest are routine fillings and root canal treatments.

"Most day-to-day dentistry is the same as we do in garrison," Jenness said. "It's good for the soldier. We can diagnose a case and try to get it done rather than having (the soldier) come to sick calls for a year."

Doing as much as they can on hygiene cuts down on sick calls dramatically and should be encouraged, Jenness said.

"Hygiene suffers during a deployment," he said. "The result is we see an increase in sick calls (over time) resulting from problems that could have been prevented."

Soldiers must get an oral exam before any treatment will be done, Jenness said. They can call for an exam or cleaning appointment or come in during sick call hours.

Patients can schedule cleanings with hygienists individually or unit first sergeants can book a block of time for a group.

Dentists located at other camps see emergency cases but have little time available for fillings, Jenness said.

"With emergencies, it's difficult to schedule a day of restorative work," he said. "But always start at the closest dentist first. If you need to come to Rumbaugh, he will send you."

Other sites with a dentist are Eagle Base, Camp Gentry in the 1st Brigade Combat Team area, Lodgement Area Linda in the 2nd BCT area and Slavovski Brod in Croatia, and in the near future, Lodgement Area Demi in the 2nd BCT.

Lodgement Area Linda and Camp Gentry also have a 1st Armored Division dentist, as does Lukavac, Jenness said.

In addition to two general dentists, the Combat Support Hospital in Taszar, Hungary, has an oral surgeon who treats broken jaws, advanced infections, third-molar extractions and severe trauma cases involving facial injuries.

DENTAL SERVICES

- Camp Gentry: 558-5673
- Eagle Base: 558-5024
- Taszar, Hungary: 558-5023
- Lukavac: 551-3623
- L.A. Linda: 551-2258
- L.A. Demi: soon to open

NEWS BRIEFS

1996 Armed Forces Day message from Defense Secretary William J. Perry

"Armed Forces Day (Saturday) is the day each year set aside to honor you, America's men and women in uniform.

"It's a honor you earn every day, everywhere in the world as you do the duty your nation asks of you. And your nation asks a lot.

"Several times this decade your nation has called upon you and you have responded brilliantly.

"In 1990-91, your nation asked you to fight aggression in the Persian Gulf: You worked with other nations to drive Saddam Hussein from Kuwait.



"In 1992, your nation asked you to fight hunger and disease in Somalia: You provided humanitarian relief that saved thousands from starvation.

"In 1994, your nation asked you to help bring stability to our hemisphere: You helped restore a democratically elected government to Haiti.

"Last year, your nation asked you to bring security to the war-torn Balkans: Today, you are helping give peace a chance in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"Whether you serve in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard, the quality of your deeds and your devotion to duty sets a shining standard for all Americans.

"On this Armed Forces Day 1996, your nation asks only that you accept the salute and heartfelt gratitude of your Secretary of Defense and your fellow citizens: We are very proud of each of you and your families."

New band MSE number

The 1st Armored Division Band has changed their phone number.

The band can now be reached at DSN 562-5618. They can also be emailed at bandcdr@pop1-email.5sigcmd.army.mil). Their office is still located in Bldg. No. 7 on Eagle Base for walk-in visitors.

Engineer night shift repairs 'Python'



SPC Richard F. Cancellieri

Pvt. Christopher Nicholson uses a Small Emplacement Excavator during the repair of Route Python near Olovo.

By Sgt. 1st Class JACK LEE
203rd MPAD

The soldiers of 1st Platoon, 362nd Engineer Company (Combat Support Equipment), from Fort Bragg, N.C., pulled an all-nighter recently.

No, it wasn't a pig roast or an all-night cram session. It was a high-way repair on Route Python.

Spc. Craig M. Scalf said this wasn't the first time the unit burned the midnight oil.

"We've done this a couple of times," he said. Scalf is a member of 4th platoon, but came out to help 1st platoon, the project's prime contractors.

The job, replacing an Armored Vehicle Launched Bridge over a natural spring with a culvert, was easier said than done.

First, 40th Engineer Battalion soldiers cleared a work lane for protection against possible mines.

They then removed the AVLB. For all the complex machinery, it was fairly simple: driving an AVLB mounted on an M-60 tank chassis up to one end of the bridge, attaching an outrigger, and picking it up.

Sgt. Chris McKinney, C Company, 40th Engineers, used hand signals to guide the launcher in for the pick-up.

He said he has launched and retrieved them many times, but "it never loses its excitement."

The AVLB was parked down the road, in case it was needed again.

"We shut down a major road to Sarajevo. In case of an emergency, like an ambulance, we would launch the AVLB again," said 2nd Lt. Andrea E. Hartman, 1st Platoon leader and site manager.

This section of the road was damaged during the war, said Capt. Heather B. Amstutz, company commander.

Amstutz reeled off a few of the reasons: "The main reason is to restore the main supply route to two-way traffic," she said. "The AVLB allows just one vehicle at a time."

From her experience with an AVLB near Steel Castle, Amstutz said the local people would prefer to use a wider bridge.

She reeled off several reasons: "Horses are somewhat scared; their hoofs get stuck. Those little wagons have trouble crossing. Those small cars. The one-way traffic ..."

With the bridge out of the way, the 362nd sprang into a flurry of activity.

First, a natural spring had to be blocked and the water diverted.

Then, the ditch for the culvert had to be cleared. A Small Emplacement Excavator began to dig out debris, while jackhammers beat the larger chunks of damaged road into more manageable pieces.

Rock used as ramps for the AVLB was recycled as fill for the culvert.

"We lay rock, tamp it down, lay rock, tamp it down. We're rebuilding this culvert six inches of rock at a time," Hartman explained.

A surveyor then aligned the pipe for the proper slope and another two to three feet of rock was placed on top.



SPC Richard F. Cancellieri

Engineers use ground compaction sleds to flatten a rocky surface.

The culvert was finished and the first traffic rolled across at 6 a.m.

Three hundred sand bags were used to landscape the head and tail walls. The sand bags also added structural strength.

Coordination was an important part of this road repair.

Area residents had to be notified of the road closing, the 40th had to remove the AVLB, military police had to be called for traffic control and the local contractor had to bring the rock on time.

"We were finished by 9 a.m. and pulled out at 9:30," Hartman said. "I was impressed with all of the hard work. The culvert should last a long time."

Signal unit keeps task force connected

By Sgt. RICK ROTH
29th MPAD

Operating behind the scenes of Task Force Eagle Headquarters' telecommunications are members of the 1st Armored Division's only signal unit — the 141st Signal Battalion.

"We handle 20,000 to 30,000 calls in a 24-hour period," said Sgt. Glen T. Best, node center 73 team chief.

Best is a four-year member of B Company from Bad Kreuznach, Germany.

The B Company "Maddawgz" have been directly providing the task force headquarters element with continuous support since arriving in December.

By employing their two node centers close to the tactical operations center, the "Maddawgz" process all of the tele-

phone calls in and out of the headquarters building.

"We get the hard jobs," said Best, a resident of Martinez, Ga.

The signal soldiers also have the job of networking the task force commander's daily morning conference call with his bri-

gade commanders.

"Without us he can't make that call," said Spc. Stephen M. Satterfield, a radio transmission operator with B Company, and a Bryansville, Md., resident.

Equipment inside node center communications vans must be monitored by soldiers around the clock.

Operators are capable of correcting most problems that occur with network links.

Best says he has his leadership's confidence.

"They trust in my expertise and let me take care of it," he said.

"Having the respect of superiors and peers is the best job satisfaction you can get," he said.

"We're the best signal company around. Right here (we set) the standards," Satterfield said.

"They go by what B Company does."



Sgt. Rick Roth

Pfc. Samuel Elizondo, a member of B Company, 141st Signal Battalion climbs to examine a rooftop antenna at the Task Force headquarters.

MISSION MEMORABILIA

First spring bazaar brings local craftsmen to soldiers

By Staff Sgt. KIRK HUTCHINSON
203rd MPAD

LUKAVAC — Let's go downtown and shop 'till we drop!

That's something Task Force Eagle soldiers haven't been able to do since deploying to the former Yugoslavia.

So, officials here brought the shops to the soldiers here for a two-day spring bazaar.

"I thought it was a good idea," said Lt. Col. Mark Hurley, 1st Armored Division Support Command operations officer. "The result is even better than when we first thought of it."

Hurley helped organize the team and call the plays for the event. Morale, Welfare and Recreation coordinator Elaine Durden-Hunter ran with the ball.

"I've put on flea markets before, so this falls in line with what I do in MWR anyway," she said. "But, the logistics here were a lot different."

Organizers had to deal with the language barrier, limited contact with local businesses and force protection concerns.

But it was well worth it, says Capt. Michael Harris, DISCOM civil affairs officer.

"It was a lot of work, but seeing the smiles on the soldiers' faces makes it worthwhile," he said.

Soldiers flocked to a clamshell and two

smaller tents that housed tables laden with hand-made rugs, clothes, sculptures, pottery, metal and wood carving, jewelry and much, much more.

"I love the bazaar," said Sgt. Delisa Walker of D Company, 123rd Main Support Battalion, as she held up two armfuls of treasures on the second day.

"I bought a lot of stuff yesterday and am buying a lot of stuff today," she said.

Local shopkeepers were just as happy to see the U.S. soldiers.

"We are here to make American military people happy," said Eso Sabanovic, who runs a family business in Tuzla. "We want to offer something fine to these people, because we are appreciative of the Americans who have brought us peace."

Happy buyers and sellers elated event organizers.

"We were like the guinea pigs of the flea market business," Durden-Hunter said. "Everyone wanted to see how it worked in Lukavac before trying it someplace else."

MWR officials elsewhere must think it worked very well. At least two base camps plan to hold similar events this month.

Eagle Base and Steel Castle will hold bazaars this weekend. Eagle Base will hold its bazaar from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday in Bldg. No. 21. Steel Castle

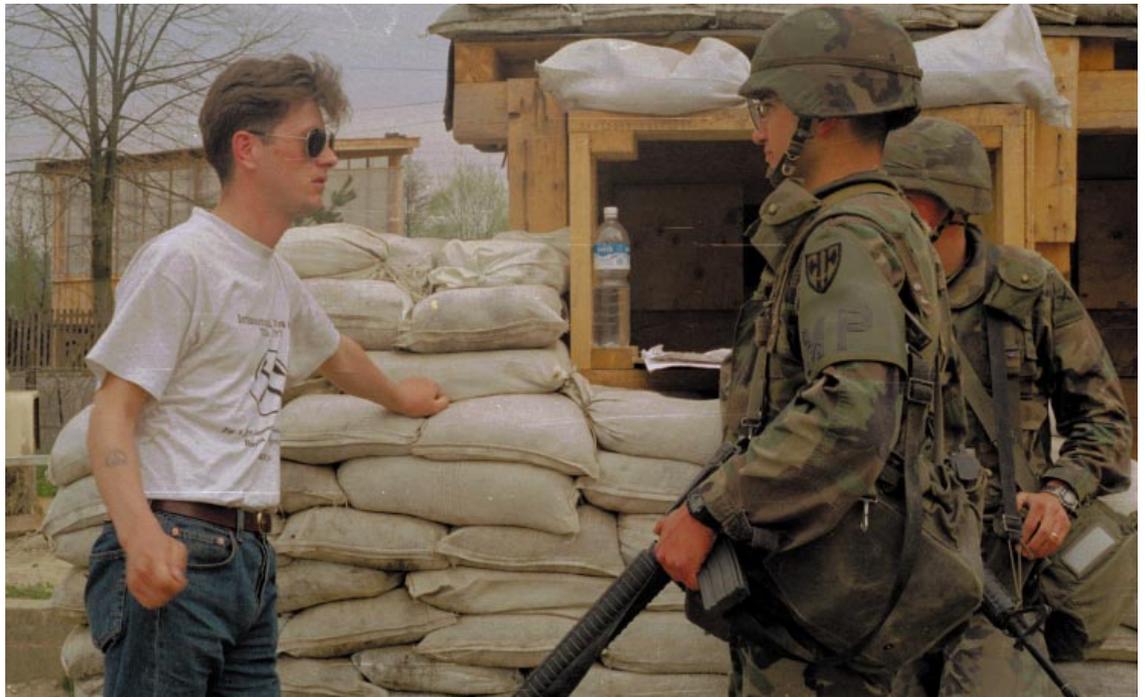


A soldier shops for local handicrafts at the recent Lukavac spring bazaar.

will hold its bazaar from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at the soccer field.

Items offered will include clothing, jewelry, coffee grinders and hand-made crafts.

18TH MILITARY POLICE BR



Photos by Staff Sgt. Amy Gunnerson, 203rd MPAD

Spc. Abel Diaz (foreground) and Spc. Trenton Davis, both with 2nd platoon, 212th MP Company, assist a local truck driver with directions at Checkpoint No. 6.



Pfc. Bryan Seybert, 212th MP Company, searches a farmer's wheelbarrow for any contraband at Checkpoint No. 2.



Right: Staff Sgt. James Soutre, an MP with the 26th Area Support Group and his dog, Wolf, search a vehicle entering Eagle Base.

55th Signal Co. (Combat Camera)

MPs protect convoy throughout Task Fo

By Staff Sgt. AMY GUNNERSON
203rd MPAD

Enforcing the peace, protecting the force and upholding the law. It's a heavy load for the 18th Military Police Brigade which is responsible for all of it in northern Bosnia-Herzegovina.

1st Lt. Niave Vernon, assistant operations officer for the 709th MP Battalion at Guardian Base, summed it up best.

"The mission is constant," she said.

MSR patrols — security along major supply routes — is an ongoing mission that allows MPs to patrol parts of the country, much the same way stateside police officers patrol their "beats."

The routes are now familiar to the MPs who look for anything that hinders or slows traffic flow. Their show of force also boosts area security.

Convoy escorts to and from the Sava River made for long days nights at the beginning of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR during the rush to follow the flood of troops southward with living and logistical supplies.

The constant convoys were at a premium when roads were at their worst

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BRIGADE



Pfc. Jamie Osmon, 212th MP Company, keeps an eye on his surroundings at Checkpoint No. 2 at Eagle Base.

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outine.

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checkpoint. Along the MSRs, the
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anines and their MP handlers.

involve checking military
for IFOR badges, and searching
ehicles and persons who have
within the camp. Locally hired
turn over their national
tion cards or passports and in
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a 12-hour shift usually consists
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skills.

and Sgt. Maj. Harold L.
the brigade command sergeant
aid beging an MPs requires
igilance with diplomacy.

d during his first traffic stop as
realized, "I was representing
MP Corps to that person. It was
nsight for me. I think that's
realized how important the job
is."



Members of the 630th MP Company take a lunch break following a drill.



Left: Master Sgt. David Marquardt (left), HHC, 18th MP Brigade, fills in for his desk sergeant at the Task Force Eagle Military Police Station on Eagle Base.



Spc. Cesar G. Soriano

Russian soldiers lay wreaths at the Victory Day ceremony, honoring those who died during World War II.

Russian, U.S. troops celebrate Victory Day

By Spc. CESAR G. SORIANO
29th MPAD

VUKOSAVTCE — More than 20 million Soviet citizens died in the 1,418 days of fighting in Eastern Europe during World War II.

On May 9 — Victory Day, the traditional commemoration of the end of “The Great Patriotic War” — U.S. and Russian

soldiers came together to remember their fallen comrades.

“Today in the hearts of my compatriots, from the small child to the aged man ... we celebrate triumph over tyranny and evil,” said General-Major Alexandr Lentsov, commander of the Separate Russian Airborne Brigade, in a speech honoring the sacrifices of Russia’s soldiers during World War II.

Under a cloudless blue sky, the Victory Day festivities were held here at Memorial Monument, located on a mountaintop in northeast of the zone of separation.

The monument, an abstract sculpture surrounded by colorful gardens and lush forests, honors local partisans who died in World War II.

Russian soldiers in traditional World War II uniforms stood at attention along a stone path leading down to the memorial.

There, Russian and U.S. platoons stood in formation together while the 1st Armored Division band performed Russian and American marches. Both countries’ national anthems were played at the beginning of the festivities.

“That representatives of various armies are here ... says that we all have the same intentions: intentions of peace,” Lentsov said.

The morning highlight was a laying of several elaborate flower wreaths in front of the monument by Russian soldiers. Lentsov and Maj. Gen. William L. Nash, task force commander assisted and paused to salute the monument. After a

moment of silence, the ceremony ended with a gun and cannon salute.

The ceremony was particularly special to Russian staff officer Lt. Col. Alexandr P. Oleinikov. His grandfather was killed in World War II while commanding a small partisan unit from Ukraine.

“The most important thing is we as military soldiers should remember and pay respect to those who have made it possible for us to live the way we do,” he said.

“Since both our nations took part in World War II, it’s only natural that we now live together in peace. ... This is a great thing; it should only have happened earlier,” the Moscow resident said.

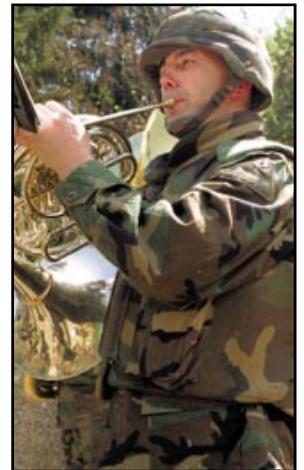
This day marked the 51st anniversary of the Allied victory in Europe during World War II.

“Our duty is to preserve this history for the next generations,” Lentsov said.



Capt. John Goheen

Spc. Jake G. Covert, a member of the 501st MI Battalion, waits for the start of the ceremony.



Spc. Cesar G. Soriano

Staff Sgt. Richard Schoenknecht, 1st AD band member, performs at the ceremony.

Army Guard unit keeps Sarajevo skies safe

By Sgt. RICK ROTH
29th MPAD

SARAJEVO — A Task Force Eagle unit from the Kansas Army National Guard is keeping a protective eye on the skies over this war-scarred city that hosted the 1984 Winter Olympics.

"If anyone fires into the city, we'll know where it came from," said Spc. Justin C. Smith, a radar operator with E Target Acquisition Battery, 161st Field Artillery.

The outfit's AN/TPQ-36 Fire Finder radar units need only track an object's trajectory for one three-hundredths of a second to gather all the necessary information.

Data is relayed to a computer, which identifies the projectile as a mortar round, artillery round or rocket by analyzing its arc and velocity.

The equipment can detect projectiles as small as pistol and rifle rounds.

More important, the computer determines the object's

points of origination and impact.

Back in Kansas, the guardsmen uses the radar in their capacity as forward observers during live-fire artillery exercises.

"It's a whole different world (here) than sitting on a hill calling for fire," said Sgt. 1st Class Derek Slack, targeting non-commissioned officer and resident of Larned, Kan.

The unit's radar equipment is extremely sensitive and designed to err on the side of safety and force protection.

As a result, each acquisition must be verified.

Here Slack intervenes, acting as a human filter for the gathered information.

"Once it hits the paper (computer printout) we take over, that's where we pick up the ball," Slack said.

He plots the round's course on a large wall map and quickly determines the threat.

"We have to decide if it meets certain parameters,"



Sgt. Rick Roth

Spc. Justin C. Smith looks toward Sarajevo as the Fire Finder Radar he operates looms behind him.

Slack said.

All suspicious acquisitions are reported to Allied Rapid Reaction Corps for investigation.

Located high above Sarajevo, Smith's radar site allows him a bird's-eye-view of the city that sprawls out below.

"When we first got on the ground there was virtually

no traffic," said Smith, a Kansas high school physics and calculus teacher from Clyde, Ka.

He said he is now able to see more and more lights throughout the city, indicating that people are moving back and rebuilding.

"I didn't think we'd be playing as big a role as we seem to be," Smith said.

Third Shop double-checks repairs to save Army money

By Spc. GEORGE ROACHE
29th MPAD

COMANCHE BASE — Ordering a wrong vehicle part can waste money and delay a mission.

So before the 127th Aviation Support Battalion's maintenance shop does repairs, its own inspectors take a look.

"The units we support bring us vehicles they're having problems with," said Staff Sgt. Timothy Doyle, 34, of Philadelphia.

"If they troubleshoot and think the engine is bad," he added. "We troubleshoot it again to verify the problem that they're having. If it's the engine, we order it."

"If they can't figure it out, we are the next step in identifying the problem," said Staff Sgt. Domingo Lomahan, 38, of San Diego.

Doyle and Lomahan are long-time track and wheeled-vehicle mechanics with B Company, 127th ASB, from Hanau, Germany.

Their many years of experience have earned them the title of automotive technical supervisors with "Third Shop," the third-echelon maintenance facility which does repairs too big for vehicle operators and motor pools to handle.



Spc. Rob Bishop

Staff Sgt. Domingo Lomahan and Staff Sgt. Timothy Doyle diagnose a vehicle's malfunction.

Third Shop mechanics replace major assemblies like engines, transmissions, axles, HEMTT crane motors, fuel injection pumps and wiring harnesses.

But before repairs begin, Doyle and Lomahan identify the exact problem.

The inspectors start by writing up any deficiencies, such as missing safety items, burned-out lights or broken wipers.

"We do an initial inspection because we might find something they (unit motor pool mechanics) are responsible for that could

be causing the problem," Doyle said.

The unit must correct those deficiencies first, so the vehicle is fully mission capable when Third Shop gets through.

"It would make no sense for it to come from (our) shop and go back on a deadline report — for us to change the engine but the truck still has a flat tire or dead battery," said Shop Foreman Staff Sgt. Jose Portalatin, 29, of Arroyo, Puerto Rico.

Inspectors also estimate the cost of damages caused by other than "fair wear and tear" for commanders and give technical advice to motor pool mechanics.

Tracing a gear-changing problem to a \$37 microswitch on a fuel injection pump avoided replacing a \$2,041 transmission. And they found a \$12 brake light switch, not a \$237 body wiring harness caused another vehicle's backup lights to fail.

"We try to find the most efficient way to fix that vehicle," Doyle said. "That's why we have different echelons of shops."

"If we encounter a problem we can't fix, we call the (Theater Army Area Command) representative who tells us exactly what's wrong ... so we don't waste thousands and thousands of dollars ordering the wrong part," he said.

Comanche base fire fighters beat the heat



Spc. Rob Bishop

369th Engineer Platoon (Firefighters) race to a fire drill.

Spc. ROB BISHOP
29th MPAD

COMANCHE BASE — In a city of tents, fire is always a concern.

It can ignite easily and spread quickly, leaving destruction or even death in its wake.

That's why the 369th Engineer Platoon (Firefighters), an Army Reserve unit from Norristown, Pa., is such an important force-protection asset here.

"We can provide fire protection for the troops in the area," said Staff Sgt. Richard Caldwell, the platoon's non-commissioned officer in charge.

The firefighters prefer prevention over firefighting.

They spend most of their time monitoring hazardous waste areas, performing crash and rescue missions, making sure tents have fire safety plans in addition to conducting fire-safety inspections, Caldwell said.

"We go on fire inspections all the time, checking out tents

to eliminate as many fire hazards as possible," said Spc. Daniel Stratton, a firefighter.

While on the monthly safety inspections, the firefighters make sure the center aisle of the tent is unobstructed and electrical outlets aren't overused, Caldwell said.

They check for fully charged fire extinguishers at each exit and fire safety and posted evacuation plans. They also ensure there are no fire hazards, such as poncho liners used as partitions.

A fire-safety plan is a list of procedures describing how to reduce the risk of fire.

Most plans prohibit smoking and advise soldiers to turn off lights when a tent is unoccupied, to keep fuel outside and to ensure liquid fuel heaters have a one-inch drip pan.

Also, soldiers must refuel heaters outside, use proper fuel in the heaters and clearly mark fuel cans.

The firefighting engineers also conduct controlled-fire reaction drills.

They arrange to have a fire set at a location and at a time

unknown to the firefighters. When the call goes out, the engineers rush to the scene.

After they put out the fire, the firefighters discuss their reaction time and ways of performing better in a real emergency.

The unit maintains a vast arsenal of fire-fighting weapons.

From the big yellow Amertek 2500L firetruck to the knot of red metal — known as the turret gun — that sprays vast amounts of water at high pressure, their tools give them the power to battle dangerous flames.

They also have protective clothing, a saw capable of cutting through wood or metal, survival air packs, axes, hoses and special crash and rescue tools.

With all of their equipment, they are prepared for any emergency that could occur during their deployment.

The reservists were even prepared for the deployment itself.

"I knew that some time in my career I would be deployed," Stratton said. "(Military Occupation Specialty) 51-M, firefighter is a rare MOS in the active component and the reserve has quite a few of them."

Boot camp buddies continue friendship in Bosnia

By Staff Sgt. JOSEPH GARRISON
29th MPAD

MOUNT VIS — Privates Brendon L. Sorenson and James D. Sabourin went to basic training together at Fort Knox, Ky., in December 1995 and quickly became friends.

They became even better friends in advanced individual training, also at Fort Knox.

Just before completion of cavalry scout training, the soldiers were happy to find that they were going to serve together in the 1st Infantry Division's C Troop, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry in Germany.

Now, the two soldiers are here, supporting Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR on scenic Mount Vis overlooking the Tuzla Valley.

"I didn't know anyone but him," said Sabourin of Hanford, Calif. "It was good to have a friend signing into our unit in Germany, going through the classes and then deploying to Bosnia."

"Basic and advanced individual training was a great experience for us," said Sorinson of Lafayette, Ind. "We both had hard times and some problems at home but



Staff Sgt. Joseph Garrison

Privates Brendon L. Sorenson and James D. Sabourin gaze down at Tuzla Valley from the top of Mount Vis.

we helped each other out, and do here in Bosnia if needed.

"We are definitely getting to see the world," said Sorinson. "It's always good to have a friend to do it with and helps us to be a team in Bosnia."

Once arriving at the 1st Infantry Division, their platoon sergeant knew they were friends and arranged to have them working together.

"It's best to keep us together, we keep

each other out of trouble," added Sabourin as the two performed guard duty at the main gate.

"We deployed once we arrived in Germany to our new unit and it was hard," said Sorenson. "But having Sabourin as a friend was a big help."

Patrols are a large part of the duties performed by Sorinson and Sabourin.

"We get to talk to a lot of people on patrols," said Sabourin. "We see kids now going to school, out walking around and it's great."

Both soldiers are taking advantage of the college courses that are available while stationed here, and have plans past their duty in Bosnia.

"If I don't go to college after my first enlistment, I want to go to warrant officer school," said Sabourin.

"I want to make the Army a career," said Sorenson. "I want to look into going to officer candidate school."

"We are lucky to be having this duty of a lifetime," said Sorenson. "We will most definitely keep in touch many years after this operation."

PERSONALITY OF THE WEEK

NCO 'shoots for the moon' while on duty

By 1st Lt. MANUEL VIDES
203rd MPAD

What is a RATT?

Ask Sgt. 1st Class Terence Green of Company B, 440th signal battalion and he will tell you, for he is a radio telephone and teletype expert.

Green was recently selected to the prestigious Sergeant Morales Club for outstanding noncommissioned officers.

Although he is proud of this achievement he would never let you know.

"I am more interested in mission accomplishment and taking care of my soldiers," Green said.

Before being sent to Bosnia, Green was assigned to the White House. He worked for Presidents Reagan, Bush and Clinton.

In that environment there is little margin for error, he said.

"Your customers are very important," Green said.

Luck has a way with Green.

He was assigned to the unit on Oct. 1, at Darmstadt, Germany. He met his platoon in the field, preparing for deployment. The 55 members of the mobile subscriber

equipment tactical node center platoon, welcomed Green as best it could.

"Getting to know my soldiers, their weaknesses and strengths, was one of the most challenging aspects I faced," Green said.

"We had to be very conscious of discipline and standards once in Bosnia," he added.

"Communications were also a real challenge to us due to the geographics of Bosnia," Green said. "We needed to set up our equipment on hilltops and Lukavac is not on a hilltop."

The negatives never slowed him or his MSE platoon down.

"Soldiers had to improvise antennas and other equipment to maintain links," Green said.



1st Lt. Manuel Vides

Sgt. 1st Class Terence Green, a RATT expert with the 440th Signal Battalion, tests an MSE telephone.

Taking care of soldiers is a full-time job Green enjoys tremendously.

"Both are equally important, one can not happen without the other," he said.

The elite SMC member has a motto he tries to live by.

"Shoot for the moon and if you miss, you are still among the stars," he said.

Bosnia deployment a family reunion for one soldier

By Sgt. 1st Class
JACK LEE
203rd MPAD

STEEL CASTLE — For one family in the region, the U.S. involvement in peace enforcement in the former Yugoslavia has not only meant peace, it has also meant a family reunion.

For Magdalena and Istvan Cernik, Sr., residents of Mali-Idos, in Serbia, and their son, Staff Sgt. Istvan Cernik, Jr., 501st Military Intelligence Battalion, Dexheim, Germany, just being on the same continent was reason for a get-together.

It had been six years since Cernik had seen his mother; a year for his dad.

First, Cernik received permission for the visit from his command. He then approached the mayor's office here.

"At the Mayor's Office, I received permission to bring my parents onto the camp, as long as I was with them," he said.

Another detail: where would they stay?



Capt. Rhonda Reasoner

Lt. Col. Kevin D. Johnson, 501st MI Battalion commander, watches Staff Sgt. Istvan Cernik receive a hug from his mother.

Cernik found the answer at the base camp's dining facility.

"A worker at the dining room was recommended to me and he offered to put my family up as long as their visit lasted," Cernik said.

With everything in place, the Cerniks departed, traveling by automobile, in what turned out to be a seven-hour trip.

"Some of the roads were very bad," the elder Cernik said. "We had to watch our speed all the

time."

"My folks had no problems at any of the checkpoints, they were just questioned and waved on, until they arrived at what I believe was Checkpoint Three (near Tuzla). At this point, they were questioned and the guards found out that they were coming to see me.

"My parents only knew that I was at Tuzla East. Somehow, the soldiers there found out how to get a hold of me and did.

"Then, they brought my parents to Kalesija, where I met them," said Cernik. Those soldiers were good to my folks, gave them coffee and food. I owe them a lot."

Cernik met the soldiers, but in the emotional family reunion, introductions were lost.

Then, it was off to meet their host.

"I am not the only one who would have offered their home to make this reunion happen," said Dzevak Hadzic through a translator.

"The Americans brought peace around my home, this is a small thing that I can do," Hadzic said.

The Cerniks were very impressed with Steel Castle.

During a tour, Lt. Col. Kevin D. Johnson, 501st commander, welcomed the family and presented Mrs. Cernik and her son with a battalion coin.

"The next time I see my parents, it will be in the United States," Cernik said. "When I get an uninterrupted year, I will bring them over in a resident alien status, the first step to citizenship."

The Talon hits the Internet

By Capt. JOHN GOHEEN
29th MPAD

The Talon is now available in cyberspace. — and in Peoria.

Task Force Eagle's official newspaper is now on BosniaLINK, the Department of Defense's Internet Word Wide Web site dedicated to news and information on Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR.

"The Internet is our combat multiplier," said Maj. John E. Suttle, 1st Armored Division public affairs officer. "Our circulation of 8,000 only reaches our soldiers and some of their families."

"The Internet enables us to tell the Task Force Eagle story beyond the Balkans," he said, "especially back to the United States where I'm sure many of our soldiers' friends and family will now become regular readers."

Public affairs offices in Tuzla and the Pentagon combine efforts each week to put the latest edition of *The Talon* on BosniaLINK. Some back issues are also available, Suttle said.

Prospective readers need only a home computer with access to the Internet, he said.

BosniaLINK's address on the Internet is <http://www.dtic.dla.mil/bosnia/talon>.

It can also be reached through DoD's DefenseLINK (<http://www.dtic.dla.mil/de>



Home computer users can now access The Talon on the World Wide Web.

fense) and the Department of the Army's home page (<http://www.army.mil>).

In addition, you can access the web site through AmericaOnline. From the Main Menu select "What's News?" which offers

"Bosnia Web Sites" among its selections. BosniaLINK is one of the several sites featuring news and information about the former Yugoslavia, the Peace Agreement and Operation Joint Endeavor.

"(Soldiers) understand this mission"
- Gen. George Joulwan, NATO commander

Joulwan, from page 1

Joulwan said IFOR soldiers repaired or built 51 bridges in 120 days of the operation. This has reconnected Bosnia-Herzegovina to the rest of Europe.

In addition, all main roads in the country have reopened and 50 percent of the rail lines in the country are working.

"The rail lines are working so well that (Maj. Gen. William L. Nash, Task Force Eagle commander) is shipping his fuel by rail," Joulwan said.

When exactly U.S. troops will leave is still up in the air, he said.

A mission-capable IFOR will remain here beyond a year, Joulwan said, and there will be no decrease in the allied force until after the September elections.

Joulwan said he anticipates an adjustment in the force mix between June and September.

"We are asking if we need (for example) more engineers," he said. "We will probably do this as

units rotate in and out."

He said there will be no increase in the number participating in JOINT ENDEAVOR.

Joulwan said forces are working with civil authorities to guarantee freedom of movement in the country and are working with members of the U.N. High Commission on Refugees to place people back in their homes.

He said he has high hopes for the International Police Task Force now in operation. The IPTF will aid in policing the area and training local police to work together.

IFOR also is providing protection for the international tribunal examining sites for evidence of possible war crimes.

Joulwan said U.S. forces and their NATO allies must maintain their focus and "keep their heads in the game."

He said U.S. troop morale is extremely high, and part of this is because soldiers "understand this very complicated mission."

Letter, from page 1

MPs," Adams said. "It wasn't a heart-breaking letter or anything. It was just a couple of my opinions. But they all started laughing. Then I told them I was going to send it to him and they said 'OK, whatever.'"

"I told him when I first came here, I was miserable," Adams said. "I'd never seen so much mud in my life; it was winter and I didn't think we should be here."

"To me, Bosnia had nothing to do with us," she said. "But after I saw all the kids playing, and actually free to go where they wanted, my feelings changed."

"I have seen a lot of family reunions on the inter-sections, and a lot of happy people. I said to myself that we should be here to give people a chance at peace, even if it is just for a little while," Adams said.

"With our leadership and the commitment of our allies," Clinton wrote, "and with the help of so many brave men and women like you, the people of Bosnia can have the chance to decide their future in peace."

Adams said her family thought she must have said something really good for the president to write back.

"Clinton is a very busy person," Adams said. "My family really couldn't see him reading the letters from the troops in Bosnia and then sitting down and writing all of them back. I just couldn't see it either. Obviously, he must have been off that day, or someone must have thought my letter was special enough for him to respond personally."

"The letter gave me motivation and made me feel proud to be an Iron Soldier," she said.

A postscript on Clinton's letter read, "I'm glad there are people like you serving our country."